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PSC 335.01: Foreign Policy

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PSC 335: American Foreign Policy

MWF 11:10-12:00, Liberal Arts 303

"Domestic policy can only defeat us; foreign policy can kill us"

– PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY (1917-1963)

Course Description

This course explores American foreign policy (AFP), the means by which America pursues its interests or ends abroad, through three questions: (1) What factors determine the goals and content of AFP and who makes those decisions? (2) Were past policies well-designed to achieve those goals and are current policies likely to achieve them? (3) How could past and present AFP be modified to increase the chances for successfully achieving its goals?

Course Philosophy

Learning is more than memorizing facts and answering questions on a test. It is using information to gain an understanding of how things work and how to make them better.

In this course, learning will be defined as the process of enhancing your ability to:

- Ask the right questions and frame good problems.
- Acquire information and evaluate sources of information.
- Critically investigate and solve problems.
- Make choices among different alternatives.
- Explain abstract ideas to others both orally and in writing.
- Generalize to new situations.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and articulate the values informing the decisions of foreign policy makers.
- Compile and compare explanations for AFP.
- Evaluate competing ethical claims about how to conduct American foreign policy.
- Defend held ethical commitments about how AFP should be conducted.

Prerequisites

To enroll, students must have at least junior standing and have completed PSC 130E.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

There are two required texts and a coursepack available at the UC Bookstore:

Carter, Ralph G. 2007. *Contemporary Cases in U.S. Foreign Policy: From Terrorism to Trade*. 3rd ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Iraq Study Group, The. 2007. *The Iraq Study Group Report: The Way Forward —A New Approach*. [S.I.]: Filiquarian Publishing. ISBN: 1599862395.

Students are also required to obtain one of the following two texts:

Colon, Ernie, and Sid Jacobson. 2006. *The 9/11 Report: A Graphic Adaptation*. New York: Hill And Wang. ISBN: 0809057395.

National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States. 2004. *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. ISBN: 0393326713.

Student Responsibilities

Students have the responsibility to:

1. Attend class regularly and complete all assigned readings before coming to class.
2. Complete all assignments by the deadline given by the instructor.
3. Complete course requirements by the end of the semester.
4. Inform the instructor beforehand of any reason they cannot fulfill these responsibilities.

Academic Misconduct Policy

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code, which is available for review online at: <http://ordway.umd.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/name/StudentConductCode>.

Statement On Disabilities

I strongly encourage students with documented disabilities to discuss with me appropriate accommodations. Because I am not qualified to make an assessment of your need for an accommodation or what accommodations are needed, if you have a disability and feel you need accommodations in this course please present me with a letter from Disability Services for Students (DSS), Lommasson Center 154 (243-2243), indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested accommodations.

Course Requirements

The following paragraphs outline the basic requirements for this course. More detailed information on specific assignments can be found on the website.

Case Participation. On "case" days, students will be selected at random to outline the "case map" and respond to questions found in the text and/or online. Responses will be graded on a "good faith" basis with 25 points deducted for clearly unprepared responses.

Take-Home Exams. After the first and second parts of the course, students will complete a take-home midterm. You must bring a hard copy of your exam to class on its due date.

Learning Groups and Collaborative Research Paper. Students will be randomly assigned to learning groups of 3-4 students. These groups will make a class presentation and write a collaborative research paper developing a national security strategy for the United States.

Final Grade

Grades will be based on points distributed between participation (200 points), two midterm exams (200 points each), presentation (100 points) and the final paper (300 points).

The plus/minus grading system will be used with grades based on the total points: A = 1000-930, A- = 929-900, B+ = 870-899, B = 830-869, B- = 800-829, C+ = 770-799, C = 730-769, C- = 700-729, D+ = 670-699, D = 630-669, D- = 600-639, F = <600.

Course Schedule

This class will feature lectures, case study discussions, and student presentations as outlined below. I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule if necessary.

August 25: Introduction to Course and Distribution of Syllabus

Introduction

August 27-29: How to Think (Not What to Think) about American Foreign Policy

We begin this course by examining two different frameworks for understanding foreign policy formulation to provide a foundation on which to build our analysis in subsequent weeks. We will also discuss psychological models of decision-making, and motivated and unmotivated biases in how we process information.

Lecture (W & F): How to Think (Not What to Think) about AFP

Chittick, William O. 2006. An Inclusive Framework for Foreign Policy Analysis. In *American Foreign Policy: A Framework for Analysis*. Wash.: CQ Press. 1-35.

"Misperception and Foreign Policy Decision-making" available in coursepack.

Part I: Values in Contemporary Foreign Policy (Weeks 2-6)

Sept. 3-5: Community Policies

Here we examine how Americans define the community in which they live. Communitarians draw distinctions between themselves and others. Cosmopolitans emphasize the similarities between themselves and foreigners.

Lecture (W): Communitarians Versus Cosmopolitans

Case (F): The International Criminal Court (Carter, Chapter 14)

Sept. 8-12: Security Policies

Here we examine two different views of conflict held by Americans: realism and idealism. Security policies are motivated by fear and security goals are determined by threat perception, but both are shaped by these two values.

Lecture (M): Realists versus Idealists

Case (W): The United States and North Korea (Carter, Chapter 5)

Case (F): The Bush Doctrine and the Invasion of Iraq (Carter, Chapter 2)

Sept 15-19: Economic Policies

Here examine how America deals with economic competition from foreign countries. Americans generally focus on growth for growth's sake or modest growth tempered by an emphasis on equality.

Lecture (M): Growth Versus Equality

Case (W): U.S. Steel Import Tariffs (Carter, Chapter 9)

Case (F): Dubai Ports World Controversy (Carter, Chapter 6)

Sept. 22-26: What should America's Foreign Policy Goals Be?

Here we try to decipher how these three sets of competing values define America's foreign policy by comparing the broad national security strategies of U.S. Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush.

Case/Discussion (M, W, & F): The National Security Strategy of the United States
Bush, George W. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*.
Washington, D.C.: National Security Council, 2002.

Clinton, William. *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*. Washington, D.C.:
National Security Council, 1998.

Sept. 26-Oct. 3: Student Presentations

Here students will make 12-minute presentations on various foreign policy topics.

Sept 26: (F): Environmental Policy

Sept 29: (M): Asylum/Refugee Policy, Human Rights, & Humanitarian Intervention

Oct. 1: (W): Nuclear Weapons, Failed States, & Military Alliances

Oct. 3: (F): Newly Industrialized Countries, Agricultural Trade, & Development

The Midterm for this Section of the Course is Due in Class Friday, October 10.

Part II: The Foreign Policy Making Process (Weeks 7-10)

Oct. 6-10: Actors inside and Outside Government

Here we compare an idealized model of how actors inside and outside government simultaneously and continuously transform foreign policy inputs into foreign policy decisions with more realistic models of the policy-making process.

Lecture (M): The Imaginary Ideal Policy-Making Machine

Lovell, John P. 1978. An Imaginary Ideal Machine for Making Policy. In *Foreign Policy in Perspective*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston: 208-210.

Case (W): U.S. China Trade Relations (Carter, Chapter 11)

Case (F): Nuclear Standoff with Iran (Carter, Chapter 4)

Oct. 13-17: The Role of Structure

Here we examine the role of structure in the policy process. Institutionalism says decisions are influenced by the structure of the government. The organizational behavior model says internal structures of specific agencies are more important.

Case (M): NSA Eavesdropping (Carter, Chapter 7)

Film (W & F): *Rumsfeld's War* (2004)

Oct. 20-24: Levels of Analysis in Foreign Policy: Politicians or Voters?

Here we examine the role of levels of analysis in interpreting policy-making. The governmental politics model focuses on key individuals in government. The majoritarian model says policy in a democracy is collectively determined by voters.

Film (M & W): *The Dark Side* (2007)

Case (F): U.S. Mexican Relations (Carter, Chapter 8)

Oct. 27-31: Levels of Analysis in Foreign Policy: Pluralism or Elitism?

Here we compare two last models of policy-making. The pluralist models says policy-making involves the participation of diverse interests. The elitist perspective says politics is dominated by elites who manipulate policy to serve their interests.

Film (M & W): *Why We Fight* (2005)

Case (F): The WTO and Export Tax Subsidies (Carter, Chapter 12)

The Midterm for this Section of the Course is Due in Class Friday, November 7.

Part III: Learning from Foreign Policy Failures (Weeks 11-14)

Nov. 3-7: Learning from Failure

Here we begin trying to "learn," as defined at the start of this syllabus, from past failures of the foreign policy process to try improving it.

Lecture (M): Six Steps to Solving Any Problem

Learning Group Activity (W): Pearl Harbor

U.S. Congress. Senate. *Attack upon Pearl Harbor by Japanese armed forces*. 77th Cong., 2nd sess., 1942. S. Doc 159.

Learning Group Activity (F): What Went Wrong in Operation Eagle Claw?

Bowden, Mark. 2006. The Desert one debacle. *Atlantic Monthly* 297, no. 4 (May): 62-77.
<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200605/iran-hostage>.

Nov. 10-14: Terrorism and The Iraq War

Here we examine in-depth a real world example of trying to learn from failure by examining the one solution to the challenges to U.S. foreign policy in Iraq.

Case (M): The United States vs. Terrorism (Carter, Chapter 1)

Case (W): Exploring the issues and defining the problem (*Iraq Study Group Report*, Part I).

Case (F): Investigating & Researching Solutions (*Iraq Study Group Report*, Part II)

Nov. 17-24: 9/11

Here we examine in-depth the failure of U.S. foreign policy on September 11, 2001 to avoid future failures. Chapter numbers refer to either version of the 9/11 Commission Report.

Case (M): "We have some planes" (Chapters 1-6)

Case (W): What went wrong (Chapters 7-11)

Case (F): What To Do and How To Do It? (Chapters 12-13)

Discussion (M): The 9/11 Public Discourse Project

9/11 Public Discourse Project. 2005. Final Report on 9/11 Commission Recommendations.
http://www.9-11pdp.org/press/2005-12-05_report.pdf.

Conclusion (Week 15)

Dec. 1-5: American Foreign Policy and Democracy

Here we discuss some final implications of making foreign policy in a democracy.

Case (M): The Rights of Detainees (Carter, Chapter 15)

Case (W): Helms-Burton Act (Carter, Chapter 10)

Evaluations (F): Instructor and Peer Evaluations; Final Papers Due.